



INNIS COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# Innis Herald

JANUARY 30, 1981

## When the Red Red Robin

M. Swan

The Innis College Alumni Scholarship has been awarded this year to Robin Laperriere. Robin is one of the best known faces around Innis College. Having come to Innis as a student, then working full time for the college, first as Art Wood's secretary and then with David King, and now re-enrolled as a full time student, she has been around Innis for a long time. She was, for many of us veterans, the first Innis person we met. Robin has also been on the Innis College Council since 1975 and has served on every standing committee of the council. She was even on the search committee that recommended Bill Saywell for the Principal's job back in 1976.

Though people certainly know that Robin has been involved in college life, what many people don't know is that she has been maintaining an A average since she got here. Academic success is in fact a habit with Robin who has won a bursary from her high-school for academic achievement and community involvement, the Wilfred McCleary Scholarship from U of T for academic achievement, and the A.P.U.S. in course award for her area of specialization, (which is English).

The Innis College Alumni Award, with its accompanying 350 dollars, is a fitting reward for Robin's commitment to the college and her academic success.



## The Edge of Innis-sanity

Anita Brédovsky

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a happy Ho-Ho and an even happier (hic!) New Years. For those of you who missed New Year's Eve at the Innisfree Farm, count your blessings. Rumour has it that everyone was sick and in bed (uh, huh!)? My, how things get around at the Farm!

And speaking of bugs, it looks as though the Bridge bug has bitten — but the question remains — how many points does one need to open the bidding?

And on the topic of bidding, it has come to my attention that the following men are in

desperate need of dates for the Innis Formal: Sandy (Pres.) Tse, Ian (Vice) Gamble, Alan (Zete-yuk) Eaton, Art (Ass. Principal) Wood, and Mike (Editor) Swan. Come on girls! Seeing as how the percentage of available single men has dropped by 16 per cent you should be jumping at this opportunity. Just leave your name and phone number in the Formal box in the I.C.S.S. office.

From the complaints department a large *Boo!* goes out to the people who come out to the Innis parties and make big messes. Mature (?) adult (?) university students are not supposed to throw beer around the room and dump ashtrays on the floor. Those who do are

cordially invited to stay behind and help clean up.

In closing, I leave you with this:  
Is Steve fooling around on Lindsey?  
Is Lindsey fooling around on Steve?  
Will the people in the "Pit" ever stop playing cards and study?  
Will the back office ever get clean?  
Will this article be published?

For the answers to these and other questions, tune in next time for more Edge of Innis-sanity.

## The Nummies Game

Get bombed and then get beaten up by some women on a hockey rink,

Or

Take the opportunity to beat a bunch of drunken men senseless on a hockey rink,

Or

Cheer on either the drunken men or the saddist women

At

The Annual Nummies Game  
Feb. 8, 10-11 p.m. at the Varsity Arena.



Train?

## The T.A. Reed Award

Are you active in College affairs? If so, you may want to apply for the T.A. Reed Award. The T.A. Reed Award is an Incurse Award given to an applicant who has achieved distinction in the political, social, or athletic life of the College. Unlike many awards, the T.A. Reed Award does not demand an "A" average or full-time status.

If you are active in College and/or University life and plan to return to the University of Toronto, Innis College, in September 1981, you are eligible. Pick up your application form in the Registrar's Office, Room No. 117. Candidates will be considered by the Admissions and Awards Committee in June.

Besides the honour this award has a value of \$300. Jim Penturn is the winner of the T.A. Reed Award for the 1980-81 session.



# On Writing

by Roger Riendeau

## *The Paragraph: The Building Block of the Essay*

An essay evolves through a series of paragraphs. A paragraph consists of a group of sentences that work together to express a single thought in a orderly manner. Within the paragraph the writer strives to state an idea, explain it fully, and build towards a general reflection or conclusion that enables the reader to move on smoothly into the next paragraph. In this way, the structure of the paragraph closely resembles the structure of the whole essay.

The paragraph may develop a complete thought in itself or may represent a definite step toward the development of a more complex thought. The ideas presented in a university essay often require a depth of analysis that must be extended over a series of paragraphs. A series of paragraphs which develop a complete thought in a systematic way is known as a paragraph block. Whether the writer is presenting a single paragraph or a paragraph block, the principles of development are essentially the same: the unit of thought must be unified, thorough, coherent, and logical.

### *The Topic Sentence*

The indentation of five spaces that usually marks the beginning of a paragraph serves two practical functions. First, it is a convenient place for the reader to pause, either to contemplate further what has already been said or simply to rest his eyes. Imagine the confusion and tedium of trying to read through pages of solid prose without some break. Thus, the paragraph unit enables the reader to consume vast amounts of material in smaller and more manageable doses.

Second, a new paragraph signals the start of a new idea. Just as an essay is organized around a thesis or purpose, so a paragraph is composed around a controlling central idea expressed in the topic sentence. The topic sentence can be located anywhere in the paragraph, but usually it is most effective at the beginning or the end. The most common position for the topic sentence is at the beginning of the paragraph where it can immediately focus the reader's attention on the main purpose of the paragraph. This is known as the deductive order of development. Less popular but no less effective is an inductive order of development whereby the writer starts with specific facts and works

towards a general conclusion which represents the main point or topic sentence of the paragraph. By placing the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph the writer can build climactically to his central idea. Sometimes, the main point of the paragraph is so obvious that an explicit topic sentence is not necessary. In such an instance a paragraph is said to have an implied topic sentence or an implied topic idea.

The main concern of the writer is not so much where to locate the topic sentence or whether the topic sentence should be stated or implied. But rather the writer must be sure that both he and the reader can readily identify the main idea or purpose behind each individual paragraph. Indeed, the topic sentence (or the implied topic idea) is the key to maintaining the unity of the essay from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. Within the paragraph each sentence should relate directly back to the topic sentence. Throughout the whole essay the topic sentence of each paragraph should relate directly back to the theses. And finally, the topic sentence of each paragraph should follow logically from the topic sentence of the previous paragraph and lead logically to the topic sentence of the next paragraph. Thus, by paying careful attention to the topic sentence students can check their essay for extraneous material and avoid going off on tangents.

### *Explaining a Point*

Besides stating his main idea clearly and precisely within the paragraph, the writer must also explain it thoroughly and logically. He must provide enough specific information so that the reader can readily grasp the point that is being made. His explanation must convince the reader that he has thought out his ideas seriously and objectively, leaving no important questions unanswered. In explaining his material a writer should consider six possible questions: what? how? why? who? where? when? It is not always necessary to provide answers to all of these questions when explaining a point, but the writer must at least contemplate which ones are most pertinent to answer in this particular case. The writer may also wish to supplement his explanation with some kind of illustration in the form of an example, a quote, a statistic, or an anecdote. Such an illustration can help the reader to "visualize" what the writer is trying to explain.

When appropriate, the writer may conclude his explanation by considering a seventh question: so what? In other words, he can reflect upon the significance, result, or implication of what has been proven or demonstrated in the paragraph. Thus, the paragraph can be like a miniature essay having an introduction, body, and conclusion of its own. The amount of space that should be devoted to

developing a paragraph depends on the writing circumstances. Paragraph length is not subject to any fixed rules but is a matter of content and style. A writer should try to avoid the extremes. A short paragraph of one or two sentences will likely not allow an idea to be developed to a sufficient depth. An undeveloped or underdeveloped point can distract the reader's attention and disrupt the flow of the writer's argument. A long paragraph of one or two pages tends to tax the reader's attention span and may lead to confusion or overcomplication. The answer, of course, lies somewhere in the middle.

The average paragraph is between 100 and 200 words long or about 1/3 to 2/3 of a typed page. A general rule of thumb is to have at least one paragraph but no more than two paragraphs beginning on each page. In other words, the writer should view paragraphs as roughly 1/2 page units of writing. If he cannot state, explain and reflect upon his idea without going too far beyond this limit then he should consider extending his analysis over more than one paragraph.

### *The Paragraph Block*

The depth of analysis and the logical organization that is required in a university essay usually makes it necessary for students to think and write not so much in terms of individual paragraphs but more so in groups of paragraphs that develop a complete thought. Indeed, the average university essay of 2,000 to 3,000 words (8-12 pages) usually consists of three or four paragraph blocks, each of which represents a major supporting point which helps to explain or prove the main idea of the essay. An essay seldom makes more than three or four points because it would be difficult to fully explain any more within its length limitation. It is far better to explain a limited number of points thoroughly than it is to explain a vast number of points briefly or superficially.

Within the framework of the paragraph block the writer presents a series of paragraphs in which he clearly states the point, explains and illustrates (if appropriate) it, and reflects upon its significance, results, or implications. Each paragraph block can be treated as a miniature with its own introduction, body and conclusion. Approaching the essay in this way helps the writer to cut down its awesome dimensions and generally to understand and control its organization.

In essence, writing an essay can be compared to building a house of bricks. The bricklayer carefully and methodically arranges the bricks in a distinct pattern so as to ensure the attractiveness and strength of the house. Likewise, the writer composes the essay by deliberately arranging his paragraphs so that his ideas will move in a clear, lively, forceful and purposeful manner from start to finish.

# CN Tower Blues

Catherine Russell

Sometimes I don't think it's silliness at all, I can believe so strongly that it's true. I mean look how it flashes and flashes and flashes: two patterns if you look close and long enough, three white lights together, vertically arranged, and a red one at the bottom, or just above the lump, a little off the beat. But regular, so regular. It has a habit of intruding on my state of mind as a powerful monotone. By filling my window it approaches me as the posters do in my room, but those I've chosen and gathered.

Strange that when all the crucial decisions were made by the learned men and the learned machines no-one paused amid their calculations to say hey, what's going to happen to all the people underneath. Or maybe someone did and was answered but they built the tower anyway. This is even worse, when things are planned. Did they know how often I would look at my black window that flashes and flashes and flashes, that in my work I would pause often in reflection to look again and again at the lights in the air, that from my desk which is not directly in front of the window I would have to tilt my head a little to the right to be able to see it, and that I would do this repeatedly just to be reassured that the tower is still there, that I would wake in mornings to look out the window to locate the concrete column stretching out of the treetops then turn away to begin a day?

Sometimes I'm on King Street or Front Street and see its trunk innocently concrete and once I ventured up the shaft in the hope of exercising something, and so

many times I return to the city driving many miles seeing as I approach the right angle it makes with the rooves, and remember that from up there my highway looks like one of many radiating tendrils. But I come home to my window and stare. And the fear creeps in and I look at the ceiling, the corners, the floorboards in my pondering pauses, but they are small, these things, they let my eyes slide away so easily: I go back to the flashing. In other places the weather is pure, it joys and saddens on its own but here the beauty is sure only when there is a certain startling reflection off the tower making it look perfect, clarified and distinct against the blue but even this is not as comforting as my cynical joy on days when the tower is completely lost to cloud.

I fantasize stories with a friend for a book called *Thirty Years Under the Shadow* about a great detective-doctor who finds a secret magnetic force in the tower that works subtle horrors over decades, which we will never write. There was the time my friends and I, somewhat high, drew up our chairs before the window and sat watching the lights displayed up the ski, sat like we were watching a movie or T.V. and we laughed and laughed when we knew we'd been there for some time. This was funny and sad and horrible.

My friend talks about gamma rays, my professor talks about phallobacitism and I'm thinking about spookiness and being haunted by a being that erases god and removes such ancient concepts as empty sky. All my window's cloud formations tangle around this non-cloud forcing itself into every abstraction I care to ponder over in my musings.

## Wishful thinking

P. Louise Smith

It is just beginning to drizzle and the day has been damplly disappointing. She is guiding the car through the automatic formula necessary to get home. On the ramp to the highway there is an unexpected slowdown; it is past rush-hour and she feels irritated by the delay, although there is no reason to hurry home. She lights a cigarette, and the line of cars comes to a complete stop.

Agonized creeping finally leads her past the accident. A low-slung white sports car had skidded sideways at the last curve on the ramp and is welded, moulded, onto the metal of the guardrail. Two police cars are already glinting yellow, and she hears a siren winding down as the ambulance crunches up along the shoulder. The traffic begins to roll more quickly now; there is no actual obstruction on the road. People have been slowing down to peer out and say I wish everyone else didn't have such a morbid curiosity.

Her car gathers speed easily as the traffic opens up on the highway. There is a great relief in being able to move quickly again, and her foot presses the pedal heavily. She realizes that she is passing the cars to her right, and moves smoothly into the left lane. The steering wheel is shaking in her hands and she glances down, amazed to see that she is approaching a hundred. The corners of her mouth turn up and she looks ahead again; the road is curving to the right.

From somewhere black the thought of her own car wrapped, red and silently sculptured around the guard rail emerges... Appealing — Her cigarette burns to her fingers and she lets it drop from the window. Mechanical movements of her foot slow the car again.



Sol Snipe, B. Comm.

It was raining out, the kind of rain that feminizes you of poodle bladders. I turned up my collar and shook the beaded moisture from my Sears lesion suit as I cast a furtive glance over my left shoulder and ducked under the flying buttresses of the otherwise unpretentious Neo-Gothic-Revivalist eatery. I was looking for a guy, an ordinary guy with ordinary problems, a guy like any other—only this guy was on a binge, on a real blender. It was supposed to be a routine case; it was the best of cases, it was the worst of cases. It's a stupid business for a grown man, but I'm a sucker for a pretty face or a reasonable tush.

"Mr. Snipe," she had breathed hotly, one hand clutching at her heaving breast, the other clutching at mine. "You must help me. I've nowhere else to turn." "Park it and spill it, sister," I croaked as she slid onto my dacron knee, sustaining only third degree fibre burns, and wrapped a pair of greasy crimson lips around a Lucky Strike.

"I'm at wit's end," she said in a husky voice, fishing up some tissues from between B-cups.

"I can see that," I muttered, encouraging my bloodshot eyes to travel down a set of legs that ended somewhere above reptile skin stilettos. "What's your pitch?"

"It's about my husband, Biff. He's been so good these past few months. I really thought he had it licked this time." She paused to adjust a Velcro garter, tears forming in the corners of her hooded eyes. "We all thought he had it licked—me, Biff Jr. and little Biffy Sue."

I nodded sympathetically. This wasn't the first tomato I'd seen hurting for a heel with a chocolate-mousse on his back. "Fell off the Metrecal wagon, did he?"

"Splat into a vat of Kraft Dinner," she sobbed, running silky fingers through my Masterline.

"I'll see what I can do," I lied, palming the double sawbuck.

That was yesterday, and this was today. And tomorrow would be the first day of the rest of my life. But in the meantime I had to find this Biff guy fast, before his bloated corpse was discovered in some ignominious alley, an empty bag of Half Moons cradled in his arms. That's how I came to be at the House of Lords (990 Parliament, \$15 to \$25, major cards accepted), a seedy gathering spot where hard

core gastronomians can score anything from Alpagetti to Nachos. It's not a pretty place (sandblasted brick, imitation wood, quaint rural watercolours); in fact, it makes you want to puke.

Entering the joint, I drop-kicked the hat-check girl, who crumbled like last night's Snackin' Cake, and pushed my way to the bar. I summoned the barkeep, as is my wont, with a volley of hot lead. "I want to see the lord of the manor," I said gruffly, repacking my smoking loaf.

"He ain't in to you, gumshoe," growled the barman, picking shards of glass from his eyebrows.

I was reaching for my loaf when suddenly Mr. Big himself appeared, masticating a loaded whistledog. "Well, if it ain't my favourite thin man, Sol Snipe," he sneered, salivating salaciously. "What brings the illustrious private dick and freelance food critic to my humble establishment?"

"Still sore about my last review?" I queried.

"Two stars!" spat Big. "This here's a class joint."

"Can the beans, porky," I said curtly. "This is business. I'm looking for a chunkie named Biff."

The hefty man sighed wearily. "What's his poison?"

"Cool Whip," I said.

"Big deal," snorted the lordly underlord, contemptuously.

"On Span."

The big man blanched.

"With a Velvita chaser."

There are some things even a seasoned restaurateur can't stomach. I slapped him with a flounder and brought him around.

"Look, I run a clean operation," stammered the heavy, calming his nerves with a Space Food Stick. "I'm not sayin' a little Cheez Whiz doesn't go down in the can, but everything else is upfront. I swear it, Snipe."

"Then you don't mind if I stick around?"

Mr. Big waged a pudgy palm. "Cutly, the best table for Mr. Snipe."

Chutly, the oily maitre'd (Cordon Bleu, Paris; head waiter Fenton's, Hy's, Norm's Open Kitchen), oozed me to a table near the back, and I smashed his kneecaps to keep him quiet. I ordered the special (Kraft Spirals with a side of rings; fairly tender, lightly seasoned but heavy on the Miracle Whip), and choked back my revulsion at the realization that dumb mugs like Biff would actually kill for just a spoon of the stuff. I was looking for the vomitorium when a stout shadow fell across my Kam pate (an outrage at \$3.75 a serving).

"Word has it you're lookin' for Biff." The voice belonged to a body no smaller than a McCain Pizza Sub.

"Not anymore," I gagged as the table swept up to meet my face.

Time went by, as it often does, and I shook my head groggily, fighting monoseudonym shock. I found myself lying face down in a gutter, a half-eaten can of Ravioli in my hand. My first thought was that Mr. Big had slipped me a Micky Dolenz, but I quickly realized that I'd od'd on riboflavin and thiamine monitrate, probably laced with a little butylated hydroxytoluene. I was feeling pretty Twinked out, but I was glad to be alive. There was movement in the gutter beside me.

"Say, pal, can you spare a dime for a King Don?"

He wasn't an appetizing sight. Yellow Pop Tart eyes peered out of a pasty chipmunk face, chubby fingers stroked a week-old beard and he had that haunted look of a gastrictad on a niacin high. It just had to be Biff.

"Get out while you still can!" I cried, driving a sharp right hook into his solar plexus. "There's a pair of legs that just won't quit waiting for you at home; you buffoon!"

He laughed hysterically. "Bite on this, flatfoot!" he babbled, hurling an empty Hungry Man carton at me. I gave chase but he didn't give it back. I dragged myself to the office, and was greedily spooning an Astro fruit bottom when she slunk in.

"You've found him," she sleazed, sucking back a grape Lola.

"Save it," I snapped. "You set up that poor sap."

"Please," she begged, twisting me around her little finger. "We can go away together."

"Look, maybe I love Frito Lays, and maybe they love me. But I'm not getting cholesterol, see?"

"I could learn to eat margarine," she murmured, her chest welling up in my eyes.

"Sorry, baby, you're going over. You're at least ten stone now." I popped open a tin of Diet Shasta.

"I'll never forget you," she burped as Ed Allen led her away.

I felt the double sawbuck burning a hole in my lesion suit as I walked out into the night, the kind of night that reminds you it's no longer day. Shaking off the evening Whip 'n' Chill I headed crossstown, only one thing on my mind. Biffy Sue answered the door.

"Remember your old man," I said, dunping a crate of turnips on the kitchen floor. Biff Jr. dropped to one knee, drew a bead and turned me into a sieve. I knew the kids would be all right.

HONEST, CHIEF...

WE DIDN'T DO IT

## The Connie and Lola Quiz or Sexual Etiquette and the Single Girl by Lola Fairhair and Connie Allbright

What a heck of a month we've had! What with returning Christmas presents to get what we really want for half the price—there just hasn't been time for a regular column. We've even had to give up our Friday luncheons at the Courtyard, and as for Bingo, why we haven't played in ages. And that's no laughing matter. As we're sure you're aware, it's a technically demanding game, exceeded perhaps only by chess, and we're in danger of getting rusty. Not to mention the ever-present danger of losing our coveted lucky seats up near Father Brannigan. Lola's missed 3 belly-dancing classes and Connie hasn't had a Henna in weeks. Whew!

Needless to say, we were intensely relieved when this cute little questionnaire mysteriously appeared on the Herald office copy desk. We thought it would be just the thing to get your face up out of the slush. So, without further doo-doo, and in the words of the great Sidney Freedman, "Ladies and Gentlemen, take our advice: Pull down your pants and slide on the ice."

1. Your Physical Geography prof. has suggested that a little extra-curricular cramming under his tutelage might improve your bell curve. You:
  - a) throw up
  - b) call your lawyer
  - c) call your mom
  - d) call the shots
2. You've just been delivered to your doorstep by a real swell cabbie. How do you tactfully lose your

roomate who is, with the assistance of an oily T.A., improving her bell curve upstairs?

- a) shout "fire"
  - b) shout "Department of Manpower and Immigration"
  - c) shout "mom"
  - d) shout "saddle up, Marsha, I've bagged a cabbie"
3. You've just been invited to spend an oily weekend with your janitor. You pack:
    - a) an asbestos flight suit
    - b) a rod
    - c) your mother
    - d) matching flea collars
  4. The morning after or, Putting out the Trash
 

Let's face it. Some men should only come out at night. When the cold morning light reveals more than you can take, and you just want to be alone, you:

    - a) burn up a bag of toast
    - b) read
    - c) call your mother
    - d) ask him if he's itchy, too.
  5. Sending up flares
 

There's a real dishy guy sitting 4 rows over, 2 seats up. How would you get his attention?

    - a) fart
    - b) shout "who farted?"
    - c) fire paper clips into his hair.
    - d) 4 rows over and 2 seats up isn't much of a hike. Change seats, stupid.
  6. Your roommate's got him. You want him. She's in the shower and he's in the kitchen and now's your chance. You:
    - a) ask him, with deep concern and sympathy, if Marsha has seen anyone yet about her little

problem.

- b) say, lightly, "she must really like you. That's the second shower she's taken this semester."
  - c) ask him, with affectionate amusement, if he's seen all the tricks Marsha can do with her false teeth.
  - d) jump on his bones.
7. You've been seeing an awful lot of one guy for 3 weeks, and still no gifts. You:
    - a) move on. Plenty more clams in the sea.
    - b) whine and snivel
    - c) drug the tightwad and cop his Visa
    - d) call your mother; she'd know what to do.
  8. Revenge
 

Some creep has busted your little heart. You:

    - a) put the heavy moves on his best friend
    - b) publish your love poetry.
    - c) ask him if he's itchy, too.
    - d) send him a 1/2 ton of peat moss, C.O.D.
  9. There's a nasty rumour on campus that you, of all people, are a sleazy little jam tart. You:
    - a) call your mother
    - b) drop acid
    - c) flaunt it
    - d) call a cab.

Now, wasn't that fun? And, no kidding, you can learn a lot about yourself from these quizzes. For example, Lola's beau has been hounding her for a demonstration of all those little tricks that Connie so casually mentioned. And it's all we can do to keep Connie out of the cabs.

But we're pleased to report, that even though it's January, and even though it's old T.O., the staff here at the Herald are still just a' laughin and a' scratchin. Ciao.

## Connie And Lola



# Profile: Men and Women of the Meter

Douglas C. Perry

In these times of economic uncertainty, many university graduates disillusioned with the job market and the value of their diplomas are opting for second degrees, mostly in the professions. However, the competition for the few vacancies in the traditional "closed shop" faculties such as law and medicine is fierce, and even if admitted students find the workload backbreaking and the demand on time and intellect overwhelming. Consequently, an increasing number of grads are considering cab driving a viable career alternative.

Just what are the attractions in livery?

Like law and medicine, taxi driving is a self-regulating profession, bound by its own stringent standards, ethics and codes of behaviour. Like lawyers and doctors, practicing cabbies are licenced by their peers only after meeting these stringent standards and swearing to uphold the codes. Unlike the medical and legal professions, however, almost anybody can get into it.

In Toronto, for example, it is not even essential to have a full BA to enter Cab College, though the admission requirements for the city-funded school are not unlike Osgoode's in spirit: the candidate must be a citizen and a resident with no known criminal record. Once accepted into the college, students find the actual course length draining but palatable — two days of classes followed by a half-hour exam. This gives the cab student a definite advantage over, say, the law student, in that the would-be lawyer must devote a tedious three years to study, not to mention another year articling, while the would-be cabbie can start school on Monday, graduate on Wednesday and be working by Friday at the latest.

Cab driving, or hacking, is the world's second oldest profession, followed closely by medicine and (perhaps attracted by the sirens) law. There is even a theory that the first oldest profession would never have flourished to the extent it has without the help of the second. But until recently, cab driving has been associated in the public mind with the lesser professions, such as teaching. For many years the taxi business, like teaching, was considered a natural dumping ground for black sheep — crazed poets, drunken painters, psychopathic killers. However, the advent of television and the general decline in literacy has enabled the cab industry to clean up its ranks, and it currently sports a family-oriented, "fast food" type image. You can bet a Big Mac the modern fare won't encounter an Oscar Wilde or a James Dean behind the wheel!

Yet, cab driving is not without romance; just as lawyers revel in courtroom drama and doctors revel in nurses, the cabbie's life is often one of high adventure. Although the risk of violence is great, most drivers find themselves equal to the challenge of whisking an anxious wedding party to a cross-town reception, or accurately changing a twenty in the dark. Danger lurks around every corner and hides behind every intersection, but there's always the possibility of a liaison, or maybe even a ménage-à-trois or so. Moreover, its shady history lends an appropriate air of mystery to the business, and many a fare has sat transfixed in mute horror as an old hacker, steeped in the mythology and lore of his trade, spins yarns of the past. Probably the most popular of these ancient tales is the story of Hacker Hamlet, a troubled young cabbie bent on avenging the murder of his father by the head mechanic. The one about the cabbie and the travelling saleslady is also a perennial favourite.

Actually, little is known of the first taxis or their drivers, but several anthropological wags have suggested that if the Ncanderthal who discovered the wheel was the progenitor of General Motors, then it was probably his kid brother who was the first cabbie. Seriously though, recent translations of the ancient script "Linear B" reveal that Solon of Athens was the first big fleet owner, utilizing about a hundred Macedonian slaves with carts. (It is said he copped the idea from the Egyptians.) Solon was forced to give up his enterprise, however, when he entered politics on the reform ticket. But the real granddaddy of modern hacking, the man who laid the groundwork for the industry as we know it today, was Fast "Eddie" Pentrano, of Constantinople. Pentrano, an independent, invented the "OFF DUTY" roof sign, and is credited with delivering the famous line, "Ten, coins extra for bags." (Legend has it that Pentrano also performed the first caesarean delivery in a taxi, but this is an historical inaccuracy. Existing trip sheets from the time indicate that while "Eddie" delivered everything from pizzas to narcotics, he maintained a strict adults-only policy.)

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Western hacking is that it serves as a microcosm of the capitalist system at a grass-roots level: the client places an order with his broker, (a drunk in a bar phones for a cab); the broker issues a tender, (the dispatcher calls the order on the radio); the broker accepts the best bid, (the dispatcher gives the order to the driver closest to the bar); the client is serviced and the deal is closed, (the drunk throws up in the back seat and the driver rolls him for his wallet). Competition in the marketplace (drivers lying about their locations) is encouraged, though an artificial demand is maintained through pre-determined tariffs and fees, (so the best liars make the most money). The only advantage medicine and law hold over hacking in this free market system is that for them unsanctioned competition is illegal. As yet, taxis must still compete with buses and private transport.

Academics aside, what can the new driver realistically expect the first day out? Nothing that the lawyer presenting his first brief shouldn't expect, or the doctor removing his first appendix. Or the lawyer defending the doctor for malpractice. As with all formal schooling, receiving your diploma (in this case, a handsome plastic card with your height, weight and picture on it) is only the beginning of your education. Time and experience turn the greenhorn into an experienced wheelman, and ambition and perseverance are the real keys to success. In other words, the first day out is hell.

But hell is for heroes, and if you feel you're fit with the stuff, and you're determined to don the leather jacket and cap, you might find the following tips useful.

As we have seen, most modern taxi fleets use two-way radios, and except for a large person with a gun, nothing is more intimidating for the new driver than learning to deal with the dispatcher. Be warned: as far as the dispatcher is concerned all drivers are "fare game", but shafting the new one is like bedding a virgin. All you can do is grin and bear it, and soon the worst will be over. Also, familiarize yourself with local radio jargon and you will be that much closer to understanding exactly what the dispatcher is saying through all the static and the marbles in his mouth. Here are some typical examples:

"All right, any bums out there working?" The dispatcher is taking bids on locations. State your number and location clearly into the microphone, which should be located somewhere on or under the dash, and if it isn't you'd better phone the owner and tell him he's been ripped-off again.

"All right, (states your number), get (states an address, usually a residence) for a live one." Pick up a person at the address stated.

"Get (states address, usually an office) for a parcel." Pick up an inanimate object.

"Get (states address, usually a bar) for a liquid parcel." Pick up an inanimate person.

Although the dispatcher and some veteran cabbies may appear hostile toward you, and use language that seems nasty and vindictive, in time you will come to understand these apparently misanthropic musings are actually gestures of affection. For example, "Drop dead" really means "The best of luck to you, my friend," and "Suck on this, crudface" really means "Your rooftop has burned out; better get a new bulb." Should anyone initiate conversation in a similar fashion, consider it a friendly overture and answer "Thank you, my mother smells of armpits." Other handy lines for shooting the breeze:

"What's this slut got on her?" How many miles on your car?

"This slut's got air, walls and lugs." My car has air conditioning, white wall tires and lug nuts on the wheels.

"Know where I can pick up a slut cheap?" Can I take your sister out on a date?

Next to the large person with a gun and the dispatcher, the most difficult person the driver has to deal with is the passenger. Nine times out of ten passengers are going to be real anal cavities; they'll make impossible demands of you, hurl abuse at you for failing to meet their expectations, haggle with you over money due. And then they'll start talking about sports. However infuriating this becomes, the driver should always temper his tongue with visions of huge tips. The driver should agree with the fare, placate the fare, politely ask the fare to pay up at journey's end. Only after money has changed hands should the driver take a tire iron to the fare's head. Those are only the bad apples, anyway; the other one per cent are OK. (Note: should a passenger actually give birth in your taxi, it is considered unethical to charge extra for the child.)

A big plus in hacking is that there's lots of mobility, and the question foremost in every young cabbie's mind is, "Where do I go from here?" Promotions are a different story, though; there just isn't that much upward movement in a lateral industry. Still, there are several positions the alert cabbie can aspire to:

Dispatcher. These positions are few and coveted, and those fat jerks that hold them aren't going to let go without a fight. As a rule, there are two routes to "the chair." First, several bottles of scotch for the over-forty set will hasten the advance of arteriosclerosis, thus opening up the field somewhat. Second, nail one of the suckers on a morals charge.

Fleet Manager. Managing a fleet is about as hard as it looks. Since the lard-ass picking his nose in the office does just that for most of the day, it is clear that his position is within the capabilities of most drivers. Your best bet is to gain a lot of weight.

Inspector. This is the hardest position to strive for. It requires gross obesity, a fondness for domestic cigars, a paranoid hatred of children and cuddly animals, and a working knowledge of Mein Kampf. On the other hand, once you've mastered those qualifications, the Commissioner's job is only a cheeseburger away.

Yes, hacking is a thankless job. Words of gratitude or encouragement are few and generally little compensation for hard cash, but the inner glow that comes from a course well driven, a roadblock successfully circumnavigated or a fare well delivered is still little compensation for money. Only nooky comes close. There are, however, various internal awards tossed around for good press, and the most prestigious of these is the "Travis Bickle Medallion," presented annually to the most high-profile cabbie. Last year's "Bick" went to a clever young cabbie who firebombed a church. Still, the best reward any driver can earn is the accolade, "He (or she) is a regular guy."

When a journalist needs to feel the pulse of the people, he doesn't hold the lawyer's hand, or the doctor's, but grips the gladly extended wrist of the cabbie. When the taverns are closed up, the seasoned drinker knows he can depend upon the cabbie to act as surrogate bartender. When the philosopher bogs down on practical points, he turns to his cab driver for advice. Interested students may therefore consider a Ph.D. a valuable asset to a hacking career, and rightly so, but a sound knowledge of sidestreets will be handier. For regardless how one arrives at knowledge, it's quicker by cab.

Ex-hacker and sometimes writer Perry is an Innis alumnus.

## GEORGE HAS A DEGREE IN MARINE BIOLOGY AND A JOB DRIVING A CAB

Science and technology graduates like George are too valuable to waste. These are the people, young and enthusiastic, who should be helping us to shape tomorrow. These are minds, fresh and innovative, that could be involved in research and development and in its application to urgent energy and environmental problems and to the task of making Canadian industry more efficient and competitive.

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put qualified people to work. In the disciplines they're trained to follow, The Canadian government is ready to help by contributing up to \$1,250 a month (for a maximum of 12 months) towards the salaries of university community college and technical school graduates with the qualifications to tackle those projects. Graduates who haven't, until now, been able to find employment in their disciplines.

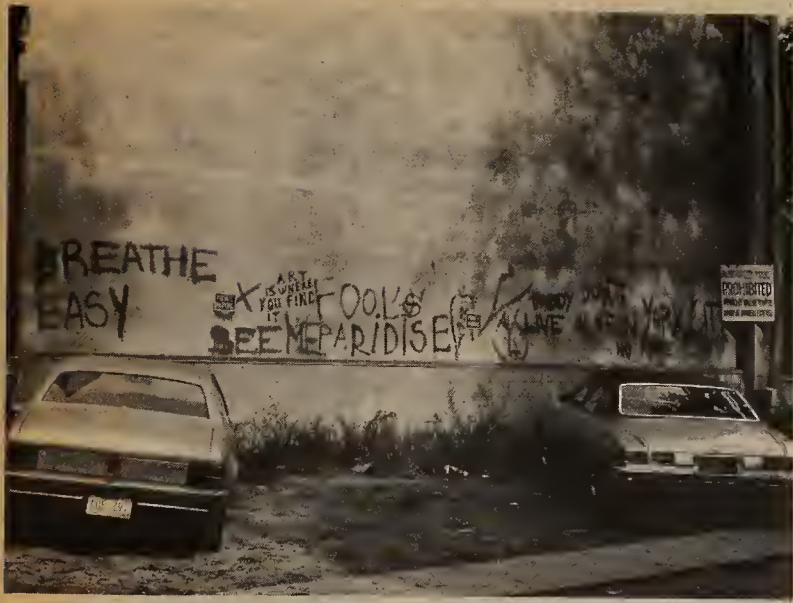
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Typical Tudor-Style Kingsway home:  
"Land of second story additions."

photo: Perry

# Liver of Darkness

Douglas C. Perry

It began as a typical literary pilgrimage, a journey into the soul like any other. It ended with my total and almost final sublimation.

"Bite into the underbelly, reveal the rotten core," ordered my editor and mentor. "I want an exposé that puts Skyshops to shame."

Assignment: the Kingsway. Disguised as a university student clerking for the summer at a local drug store, I would infiltrate and investigate the urban blight.

At first I resisted the idea, claiming my insurance didn't cover war zones, but actually I questioned my ability to handle so complex and delicate an issue as metropolitan angst. My editor assuaged any doubts. "There's a thousand bucks in it for you," he said. "Rise to the challenge."

I think it was Oscar Wilde who once said that those who go below the surface do so at their own peril. And of course the Shadow knew what evil lurked in the hearts of men. But I hailed from the big city and was ignorant of the ways of the Hollow Men, and I accepted the mission.

Montreal has Mount Royal and Ottawa has Rockcliffe — and who cares what Calgary's got — but only Toronto has the Kingsway. Tudor facades set well back from quiet tree-lined lanes, protected from the outside world by a plethora of no-left-turn signs, this apparently peaceful parcel of urbanity has for decades successfully defeated attempts by outsiders to learn her dark secrets and exploit her hidden wealth. Known as Toronto's first planned community, or the "dark continent," many a good journalist has perished there, many a fine artist offered up his soul to who knows what pagan idol. From the murky, moody waters of the Humber River to the ugly slime that is Mimico Creek, the Kingsway is a perilous and treacherous bog, only waiting to suck up the unwary pilgrim.

What randy, debased race is this? I wondered, perched behind a counter of multiple vitamins. A population of bankers, executives and politicians, concentrated in a living space no larger than Prince Edward Island, is it any wonder that they are inbred and unholy, any wonder they are feared and resented by outworlders? What strange socio-economic powers did they wield? Could I penetrate the crusty exterior and delve inside, and return to tell the tale? Oh, blessed ignorance, would that I had never touched upon the heart of the thing!

It is a world unto itself, this sleeping giant called the Kingsway. It is feared and hated, yes, but because it is so unobtrusive, so self-contained, it rarely suffers the popular abuse and outrageous slings hurled at more visible, high-profile communities. Even the most seminal of pundits are loathe to refer to it, preferring to ignore it completely, and if pressed will only grudgingly admit to a mysterious "West End." The poets call it "the land of second storey additions."

From my vantage point at the drug store I observed the seething morass of helplessness and despair. The Kingsway sags under the very weight of its own wealth, but it is not the wealth of the nouveau riche, or even of the old — it is the money of the dead. People do live there, but it is a place bereft of life. There are no neon signs, body rub parlours or pinball palaces, precious few pool halls and nary a bowling alley — it is, in short, a cultural wasteland. Children grow up there, but as adolescents they become dispirited and bored, for they have been raised on a deadly diet of ballet lessons and educational television, and feel deprived of the cold comfort of concrete and shopping plazas. The future holds little for them, most slated to wind up as doctors or lawyers.

And yet, they are a proud people, tradition bound, stubbornly clinging to customs as doomed as they are antiquated. They inhabit a world where sanitary engineers are still called "garbagemen" and university students are "boys and girls", where cohabitation is "living in sin" and cream-coloured Fleetwoods and Continentals are replaced every two years whether they need to be or not. It is a society that agrees with the abstract that all men are equal in the eyes of God and the law, but is firmly convinced that the theory predates the invention of money and the English class system. It is a place where the curious and universally applicable tribal expression "Can you imagine?" is employed with red-faced indignation.

Still, it is a depraved and primitive culture, hellbent upon its own destruction. After a mere two weeks operating undercover I began to sense the panic welling up all around me, the panic native Kingswayers fall prey to whenever they believe they are being threatened. I placed a covert call to my editor.

"The cost of energy is skyrocketing all over the world," he assured me. "How long does the Kingsway think it can hold out?"

"They view it as a personal inconvenience," I reported. "I don't think they're aware of the world situation."

"Sponsor a refugee family and parade it around the neighbourhood," he suggested.

A good writer is expected to become intimate with his subject while maintaining a healthy distance from it — the paradox of professional art — but the deeper I dug into the Kingsway, the further I travelled into its psyche, the more I became aware of the pressure within myself. Oh, the evils I had witnessed! The vile degradations, the manifestations of the dark side I had experienced since my arrival, and had yet accepted numbly, mutely, as a seasoned veteran! But who would remain immune to such a place — paved roads free of potholes, schools with real windows, cheap parking. And everywhere the trees; I would not escape the omnipresent green!

There was something inside me pressing to get out, something I had suppressed for many years, and my fears began to mount. I tried telling myself that it was only the vast manicured lawns that were getting me down, but I knew that there was some terror, some malevolence close at hand. I could feel the panic, growing daily, clutch at my throat.

One day, while watching an old lady savagely beat an electrician, it happened. With shaking fingers I dialed my editor.

"You sound terrible," he said.

"I've finally snapped," I said. "I can't fight it any longer. I... I want to buy a car."

"Get out of there, quickly!" he barked.

"It's no good," I said, laughing hysterically. "I've already sold my bicycle and cancelled my subscription to Apartment Life."

"Look, I'm sending in another writer. Just hang on until he arrives."

"Too late! I'm going to mow the lawn and fix a gin and tonic!"

My editor was silent for a moment, and then he whispered, "The horror! The horror!"

The disease seized me, blinded me to everything but a mad desire for order out of chaos, for the triumph of reason over emotion. I know now that I was possessed by Lucifer himself as I banged on doors and begged to wash cars for a quarter. I was consumed with a maniacal lust for rump roasts, retirement savings plans and Melnor sprinklers.

I felt I must gain acceptance into the Kingsway, become one of the coven. I rushed into the drug store and collared the assistant pharmacist. "Answer me!" I cried; "What makes an ordinary, well-balanced person want to become a druggist?"

He took my burning head between his hands and stared hard into my eyes. "No matter what anyone else tells you," he said, "it has nothing to do with washing out of pre-med."

I reeled at this, and partially recovered a sense of my old self. It was a lie, and if there is one thing I cannot abide, it is a lie. I knew the assistant druggist was a latent doctor.

I forced myself out of the shop, confused and wracked with fever. Some innate sixth sense guided me toward the city, toward sanctity and safety, and summoning up every last gram of strength in my tortured body, I made it home.

Later, when I had recovered myself more fully, I was so grateful at having survived this brush with the nether world that I took my editor out to dinner. We dined in a greasy spoon set high atop a giant concrete pillar, and revelled in the myriad of steel and glass around us.

"Have you figured out why?" asked my editor, mopping up the last vestiges of gravy from the plate with his fingers.

I eyed him fondly, reflecting how lucky I was to be there. "Negative ions," I said, and shuddered. I needed a long holiday, somewhere highly trendy.

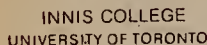
He nodded sagely. "Nasty business, negative ions. Look what happened to Huron County."

I cast my eyes over his shoulder and watched the city-scape unfolding beneath us, but soon the view was obstructed by a bank of black clouds moving in from the west. For a brief, horrible instant, staring into the darkness, I wondered what was on educational television.

Ex-clerk and hack journalist Perry is an Innis alumnus.







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# EDITORIAL

## A Guide To Suicide

Now that it's January, and you're sure that you're going to fail all five of your courses, and you don't have a cent in the bank, and you still owe \$476 in fees, and you owe another \$200 to the library for some books that you took out, threw under your bed and forgot about, and your parents moved while you were away at university without leaving a forwarding address, and the cockroaches in your room have complained to the landlord about you, and your girlfriend is pregnant, and you're still a virgin — it's time to consider suicide.

This is not a decision to be taken lightly. It's a decision that could have serious long-term effects on your employment prospects, your social life and your squash game.

The first thing you must consider is method: You could take the easy way out. That's right, — anybody can walk into New College, eat the food and have done with it. Or, rather, be done in by it. But this shows no pizzazz, no imagination and no class. Remember, you're from Innis College, and when you finally buy the farm it should bear the markings of the traditions of Innis. Your fellow collegians would be proud to say "That was an Innis suicide."

That was an Innis suicide! Great Innis suicides of the past have included that of Ben A. Drene (class of '69) who stole the 'I' from the Innis College sign and hit himself over the head with it until he passed out. Unfortunately he recovered. Maybe the most celebrated Innis suicide was that of Les P. Niser who, after having been abandoned by the only woman he ever really loved (one Alice Fallice) went down into the Innis pinball room, disguised himself as a pinball machine and waited for someone to come down, pound him senseless and rip his legs off. It was over in a matter of minutes. Most recently there was the case of Hamilton

Sandwich who tried to run himself through the food processor in the Pub. He was, however, thwarted by Fuzz who insisted that the charge for outside use of the Cuisinart was \$2.15, and poor Ham never did get up the cash.

Still, there are many possibilities yet to be explored. Roddy McDonald has recently suggested that one could break into the basement of Robarts and find radio active cockroaches there which one could eat until one glowed in the dark. The advantage of this method is that your corpse could be installed in the Pinball room as a much-needed light fixture. The success of this plan is contingent on there being radio-active cockroaches in the basement of Robarts. Roddy insists that there are, and hell, he'd know.

Another possible way to end it all might be to attend an Innis College Council meeting where you could die of either a) boredom or b) old age waiting for the meeting to end. This is however a long process and not for the faint of heart, though it does reveal a particularly elevated sense of duty to one's college.



If you are attracted by the gas chamber concept there is always the Kitchen of the Roberts cafeteria where they manufacture their wonderfully petrified cornucopia. The Roberts Cafeteria also offers the possibility of running oneself through, Samurai style, with a submarine sandwich.

If you want to remain close to home, drowning is always an alternative here at Innis. On any given rainy day, just lock yourself in the I.C.S.S. office and wait for the flood. No doubt you have noticed that this material is getting weaker and weaker. This thought depresses me. I don't know how to end it. This thought increases my anxiety and feelings of inadequacy. I think that I shall simply end it all.

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# Review

## Cockburn At Place Des Arts

M. Swan

Bruce Cockburn's greatest liability is his current band. At a time when Cockburn's material is becoming stronger, and more demanding of the musicians, requiring a tighter and more competent band, he has assembled for himself a dismal little ensemble. The only exceptions to this general condemnation are Hugh Marsh on violin and Cockburn himself.

Unquestionably the worst musician of the bunch is Denis Pendrith, the bass player. Not only does his sense of musical invention lead him unremittently to I.G.A. jingles and elevator music, but he is technically incompetent. He seems unable to play off the beat, throughout last Friday's performance he needlessly doubled the left hand of the piano when he should have been playing with the drums, and in both *Tokyo* and *The Light Goes On Forever* he was unable to maintain Cockburn's tempos.

The next worst performer has to be Bob Di Salle, the drummer. It may be true that Cockburn's music requires "laid-back" drumming. That style of drumming that was practically invented by Russ Kunkle, who used to play for such laid back types as James Taylor and Carol King, based on the admirable premise that less is more, requires more than dully repeated riffs of little or no imagination. In the course of an evening of Di Salle's lugubrious thumping one can't help wondering whether he might fall asleep before the concert is over.

In contrast to this pathetically unprofessional duo on bass and drums Catherine Moses has some ability. Famous around Toronto for her pleasant pop-jazz flute, her greatest asset is her full, strong jazz voice which was used delightfully in a fine rendition of

Cockburn's lovely blue-jazz *Mama Just Want To Barrelhouse*. The question is whether Bruce Cockburn really needs someone in his band that can sing his tunes better than he can. The listener must weigh the small advantage of her voice against the rare distinction that Catherine Moses holds as the most boring saxophone player in the universe. The woman has little technique and less invention; she is a soloist oblivious even to the possibility of a clever line or an ear-catching tonal colour.

The pianist, John Goldsmith, performed the function of replacing Cockburn's own, on record, piano playing but, unfortunately, did little more than that. To be fair Goldsmith might have contributed more to the band if his electric piano had been mixed higher in the sound and had he not had to compete with the dull thudding of Denis Pendrith's bass. Unfortunately the combination of soundman and bassist left Goldsmith's electric piano, for the most part, inaudible. This is unfortunate because Goldsmith's acoustic piano (which was audible) was quite satisfying.

All of this incompetence (including the incompetence of the soundman, Scott Forbes, who was trying to make banana mush out of a band that needed some hard, sharp and clear edges) was not enough to spoil Cockburn, or his enthusiasm for his new material. This enthusiasm manifested itself on the best tune of the night which was called "Loner". This piece was originally written for the *Humans* album but turned out to be one piece too many. This is unfortunate because it is better than anything that is on the *Humans* album, and is probably the best thing that Cockburn has ever written. Cockburn used his electric guitar here to create an effect that is scary and

claustrophobic. On top of this Hugh Marsh's violin solo was brilliant: frightening and compelling.

Most electric violin players come off as a sham. Lots of electronic effects but very little musical content. Hugh Marsh's electric violin, however, has a genius about it that comes from a balance of showy virtuosity, musical ingenuity, and a unique ability to control the electronics of his instrument, using those electronics as part of the acoustic material available to him rather than let the electronics run away with every solo.

Cockburn himself was pleasantly aggressive throughout the night. He played a lot more electric than acoustic guitar, he moved around the stage leading the band, his voice was strong and he even growled a little. In the middle of "Justice" the person beside me turned and said to me "He's bopping!" and she seemed genuinely amazed by the sight. During *The Coldest Night Of The Year*, a song that Cockburn wrote the Saturday after New Years, Bruce threatened to turn into the Springsteen.

Cockburn played more new material than old, and thought it was a pleasure to hear "Silver Wheel," the newer the material was the better it was. "Loner" was clearly the standout of the evening, that tune alone was worth the price of admission. Other praiseworthy performances included *Rumours of Glory*, *Justice*, *You Bay Your Money And You Take Your Chance*, *Tokyo*, and *The Light Goes On Forever*. Cockburn remains an impressive guitar player and, in combination with Hugh Marsh, he seems to be extending his ability into new ground. I don't know if he will be playing a concert in Toronto with this band, but if he does you could do worse than to catch this show. Whatever the incompetence of his cohorts Cockburn's own competence remains obvious and enjoyable.

## '80 Best Canadian Stories

Lauren Mould

80: Best Canadian Stories, edited by Clarke Blaise and John Metcalf, Oberon, 193 pages, \$6.95

This is a collection of what are reputed to be the 10 best Canadian stories written in the past year. The editors, Clarke Blaise and John Metcalf, (short story writers themselves,) looked through hundreds of unpublished manuscripts and over two dozen periodicals in which Canadian short fiction appears. Seven of these stories were chosen from magazines and the remaining three are making their first appearance in print. One of these stories, *Esso* by Linda Svendsen, won first prize in the Miss Chetelaine short fiction competition of 1978, so it is curious that it should be included here as one of the 10 best of 1980. Also curious is the inclusion of Joyce Carol Oates, a well known American writer.

At least half of the writers should be known to anyone familiar with contemporary Canadian writing. The biggest names in the collection are Alice Munro, Mavis Gallant and Joyce Carol Oates. These three writers set high standards for the collection and there is, in my opinion, only one other writer who meets the challenge.

That writer is Linda Svendsen whose *Esso* is an engrossing memorable portrayal of a young girl's unfolding in the unromantic setting of her uncle's service station. The story is written with originality and humour. Svendsen is one of the youngest writers here. She is presently working on her first collection of short

stories and if the others are as good as this one then she is certainly someone to watch out for.

The Munro story, *A Stone in the Field*, focuses on the sheltered, reclusive lives of the narrators six maiden aunts who are bound by a somewhat mysterious past. What gives the story its power is Munro's penetrative narrative. As always, she is writing with wit, clarity and psychological accuracy. Mavis Gallant's, *Speck's Idea*, is the only story to take place outside of a Canadian setting. It is about a gallery owner in Paris who hopes to make himself rich and famous by rediscovering a forgotten French painter. The problem, however, is the forgotten painter's widow who sits, unbudgingly, upon the desired treasures. After a somewhat long winded start, the story that unfolds concerning these two makes for delightful reading. It is simultaneously humorous and sad.

The Oates' story, *The Reliquary*, deals with the repressed, complicated feelings of a fifteen year old girl whose parents have separated. Because of the absence of her father's love, the young heroine has developed a sort of split personality. And on the day on which the story focuses the father and daughter are out on one of their weekly excursions, this time to the Cloisters. One minute the heroine is trying to be a prim young lady who will impress her estranged father, the next minute she is fuming with bitterness and hate. It is an intense, dramatic story.

Leon Rooke's, *Devious Strangers*, is the most experimental piece of writing in the collection. It is written in a first person stream of consciousness style, and again, like many of the stories here, it is concerned

with adolescent passion and accompanying fantasies. It is somewhat tedious and uneventful. Rooke has already published four collections of short stories and his first novel, *Fat Woman*, has been well reviewed.

The Barry Dempster story, *A Large K in Kill*, is very unconvincing. A husband plans on having his wife killed by hiring a hit man, however the plan falls through because of a contrived coincidence. It is a silly story, weak from beginning to end, and never for a moment believable. Also disappointing is David Helwig's, *Aria Da Capo*, in which a successful radio announcer has an affair with a woman who has been infatuated with him since high school. Personally I find Helwig's prose style unmoving and uninteresting. The sentences are too clipped, too tidy, and the language is rarely more than sufficient.

More noteworthy is Guy Vanderhaeghe's, *What I Learned From Caesar*. In this story the narrator recalls the crumbling of his father's illusory world and his eventual commitment to a sanatorium. The son struggles to explain and justify his father's fall, and also to keep his own pride intact. Martin Avery's, *Chinese Gold*, is another youthful reminiscence. But it is hardly a story, more of a documentary history of the Gravenhurst area, and it is, unfortunately, a very uninteresting piece.

Despite the fact not all of the stories are first rate the collection is still of interest. It should be particularly interesting to aspiring writers, not only as something against which to compare your own writing, but as an indication of the sort of thing being published in Canada today.



# Welcome To My Dungeon

Roddy Macdonald

As they turned the corner, the Elf who was leading the group pulled up short and whispered to his companions. The Dwarf shouldered his way past two of the humans to the front and confirmed that he too could "see" the temperature difference that indicated living creatures in the recesses of the large, dimly lit hall. Almost at once the unidentified creatures began to cross the hall to attack the intruders. The Elf and the Dwarf fell back to allow the Human magic-user to step forward. A javelin flew overhead and narrowly missed the taller of the two clerics at the back of the group. As they approached, it became apparent that the attackers were Troggs. The magic user, rubbing his fingers through the sand in one of his pockets, cast a "sleep" spell and about half of the Troggs were affected. There still remain about a dozen Troggs eager for battle — particularly against the Humans in the small party of adventurers. The cleric at the rear of the party begins to chant (calling upon his deity to give strength to his group and weaken their opponents) and the battle begins in earnest.

The Elf and a third Human jump forward to face the first of the Troggs, their strength and fighting abilities being greater than those of the others in the party. A large male Trog wielding a battle axe gets the first shot in and slightly wounds the Elf (who is nimble enough to avoid a direct hit) but the Elf retaliates with a dagger. The secretion emitted by the Troggs in battle has a weakening effect on the group but they fight on. The Human fighter kills his opponent outright on the first blow. The magic-users (a Human and a Half-Elf) are both able to severely injure the Troggs they encounter, with magic missiles launched from their fingers. The Half-Elf evokes a "shield" spell which protects both him and the chanting cleric behind him from the javelins being thrown by the Troggs. The Dwarf has been wounded in the leg by a Trog sword, but the Elf fighter leaps in and beats off the attacking Trog. The Human fighter hurls his throwing knife at an oncoming Trog. The knife is deflected and the Trog prepares to attack the Human. The lives of the whole party are in the balance as the outnumbered adventurers struggle to overcome the ferocious Troggs.

This battle is neither the product of a Hollywood scriptwriter, nor of an accomplished writer of fantasy. All the characters exist only in the imaginations of players in a recent Sunday afternoon session of Advanced Dungeons and Dragons (AD&D). The setting is a smoke filled library, noisy with the clatter of dice and the decision-making conferences of the players, both experienced and novice. Every detail of the characters' attributes and abilities, as well as their belongings and special skills are carefully recorded and updated. The action as the campaign progresses is decided with the aid of dice (ranging from the "straightforward" six-sided dice, to four-sided, right through to ten-sided dice), but it is all tempered by the knowledge, abilities and experience of the individual characters. As the Trog descends onto the Human fighter to battle hand-to-hand, it is the toss of a six-sided die which decides who takes the initiative to strike first. Battle dice (a ten-sided die used in conjunction with a six-sided die) determine how severe the blow is and the damage is assessed by tossing different sets of dice depending on the weapons used, the strength and/or magical ability of the character concerned as well as how experienced he is in combat.

The whole situation is controlled by the Dungeon Master (DM) who runs all the non-player characters. The DM has in his repertoire an assortment of creatures ranging from simple animals through Trolls and Orcs to Green Slime creatures and Black Puddings (a monster composed of groups of single cells which can pass — or flow — through narrow openings as well as eat away metal armor). There are over 350 such creatures listed in great detail in the *AD&D Monster Manual*. The DM does not lead the characters on their adventures, or determine the events which occur. He merely describes the area in which the characters find themselves and they must decide their course of action. The DM, in consultation with his notes, tables, periodicals and reference manuals describes the creatures encountered and answers some questions the players may have. The course of events is decided by the imagination and ingenuity of the players in reacting to a given situation and by the role of the various dice. The adventures vary from the mundane to the bizarre and can touch on everything in between.

The prime object of the player characters is to survive. Along the way they collect treasure and gain experience. The more experience a character has the more likely he is to survive the campaign. Player characters advance by levels depending on experience points earned, treasure recovered, monsters killed etcetera. As characters reach higher levels certain skills become sharpened and clerics and magic-users are able to use more, and more complex spells and potions.

Dungeons and Dragons is the creation of E. Gary Gygax of Wisconsin. It first surfaced about 1974 and quickly became something of a fad. The basic version of D&D is popular with the under 18 set. According to *Discover* magazine (January 1981, p. 33), children aged 10 to 17 accounted for 77 per cent of sales of D&D games last year. Advanced D&D tends to be popular among university students and war-gamers. The basic equipment for AD&D is *The Players Handbook* and *The Monster Manual*. For the more experienced players wanting to try DMing, the *AD&D Dungeon Master's Guide* is invaluable. There are supplementary volumes (*Gods, Demi-Gods And Heroes, Swords And Spells* and others) as well as a wide variety of lead figures used to represent the characters, and of course, the obligatory set of dice. Although this is anything but a board game it is useful to have the lead models on a scaled grid-like sheet to specify the characters' relative positions or their positions inside a room.

There is a monthly gaming magazine called *Dragon* which, like all the AD&D manuals mentioned, is published by a division of TSR Hobbies of Lake Geneva Wisconsin. Gygax started the company with a \$2000 investment and it has blossomed beyond anyone's expectations. The sales figures for the company are staggering \$8.9 million in 1980, and Gygax expects that figure to reach \$20 million in 1981.

Interest in fantasy and role-playing games has continued to grow at a fantastic rate in the last half dozen years or so. D&D is perhaps the most popular of the many such games in play in North America today and interest continues to grow. The game is a social event. Characters' attributes become well known to players in a campaign and the smallest details are considered when characters take action. The game has as wide a scope as the imaginations of its players and that must surely be the basis for its appeal. Within the guidelines set out in the various manuals lie an infinite variety of characters and campaigns that merely await your imagination to bring them to life.

Eugene McNamara  
and Charles Douglas  
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